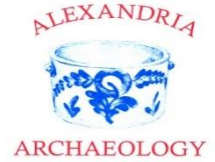




City of Alexandria  
Office of Historic Alexandria  
*Immigrant Alexandria, Past, Present, and Future*  
**Oral History Program**



Project Name: *Immigrant Alexandria: Past, Present and Future*

Title: *Interview with Vaso Volioti*

Date of Interview: *05/06/2015*

Location of Interview: *Alexandria, VA, Vaso's Mediterranean Bistro*

Interviewer: *Krystyn Moon*

Transcriber: *Heather Hanna*

Audio Recording: *John Reibling*

Abstract: Vaso Volioti was born in Cyprus on 1957 and immigrated to Alexandria, Virginia with her family in 1969. In this interview she discusses her extended family in Alexandria, her school years, cooking Greek-inspired Italian food, running her family's restaurant, and the aftermath of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. Her son John (Johnny) also talks about his mother's experience as an immigrant and adds his own thoughts on the situation in Cyprus and growing up in a bi-cultural household. Several other family members are occasionally present. Most do not speak often; Johnny's wife and other family members speak, but most are not identified by name.

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<b>Introductions</b>	
Krystyn Moon:	And it's, Volioti?
Vaso Volioti:	Volioti.
KM:	Okay.
John Voliotis:	You said it very well actually.
KM:	Okay, I'm trying. What is today?
John Reibling:	Today is the sixth of May.
KM:	Thank you. I was like, what day is it? All right, ready? This is Krystyn Moon, working with the Office of Historic Alexandria, and we're doing an interview with Vaso Volioti, and it's May 6, 2015, and we are actually at Vaso's Mediterranean Bistro, up on the second floor. Ah, do we need to do a test to make sure it works?
JR:	It's working.
KM:	All right, so Vaso, first of all thank you so much for agreeing to do this for the city and sharing your story and sort of helping demonstrate how wonderfully diverse the city of Alexandria is. The first question I wanted to start with was to talk a little bit about your childhood and where you're from in Cyprus, and what it was like growing up there. I brought a map—wait, you'll like this map better.
Vaso Volioti:	Yes.
KM:	With the bigger print. Could you sort of point to where you grew up and what it was like there.
<b>Arrival in America</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	Okay. I came in 1969.
KM:	Um-hm.
Vaso Volioti:	And, I grew up right here, Lapithos, Karavas. Walking distance to the beach. I was like ten, eleven years old.
KM:	Um-hm.
Vaso Volioti:	And my life was great. I cried for coming here.
KM:	You cried when you came here, or you cried—?
Vaso Volioti:	I cried when I came here because I was looking forward to going back. Because, you have your friends at that age, you know, ten years old—.
KM:	[interrupts] Oh, yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	You live the best life, you know, and then we came here. Then, the first place that I came was Dulles Airport. A group of —mom, my parents, and my sisters, brothers, eight of us, we stop at Hollywood Restaurant on Washington Street.
KM:	Right.
Vaso Volioti:	That was my uncle's, Andy's restaurant.
KM:	Uncle Andy?
Vaso Volioti:	Uncle Andy.

KM:	And, is he a Volioti too?
Vaso Volioti:	No, no. He's, ah, my Mother's brother.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	So we went right there. We all had dinner, then we all went home. The rest of the family was here, they were here before us.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	In this state. And then from there we all started going to school.
KM:	Um-hm.
Vaso Volioti:	All this family that we had here, they all owned restaurants. Like, the Hollywood restaurant on Royal Street, Andrea's restaurant down on Route One [U.S. Route One], so my parents didn't really look for a job right away, they got a job.
KM:	Right away.
Vaso Volioti:	Right away.
<b>Reason for Coming</b>	
KM:	So, when you were in Cyprus did you know that you were probably all going to come and then work in restaurants here in Alexandria?
Vaso Volioti:	No, no. When we were in Cyprus, my oldest brother was sent to America to live with my aunts and all that because my mother sent him, because the teacher that we had there — the English teacher, she complained to my mom that her son didn't know how to speak English.
KM:	[laughs] Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	So, she says, okay, that's how you—. She decided to send him here. So, she says, okay, I'll fix him up. So, she sent him here, to the United States.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	He was like fifteen, sixteen years old.
KM:	Um-hm.
Vaso Volioti:	So, in like, a year, my brother was having a hard time without his—.
KM:	[interrupts] Family.
Vaso Volioti:	Siblings, and family, and all that stuff. So, we all decided to come here to finish school for five years, and then we all were going to go back.
KM:	Oh, ahh. [laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	That's what it was. For five years, but I guess it ended up like five decades.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	We're still here.
KM:	You're still here.
Vaso Volioti:	So, you know, everybody—.
<b>Turkish invasion of Cyprus</b>	
Male Voice:	Well, the Turks invaded, and then you couldn't go back.
Vaso Volioti:	Well, yeah. We came here in [19]69, the Turks invaded in—.

Male Voice:	[19]74.
KM:	[19]74, yes.
Vaso Volioti:	Seventy-four. So, what happened was, the rest of the family came here. So, there are about three hundred of us around, in Old Town [Alexandria, Virginia.]
KM:	Okay. And, is it both your mom and your father's side that came in [19]74 or —?
Vaso Volioti:	Ah, no. My mom's side, they were here in, before [19]69. The year before, my grandmother, my grandfather—they already had business going.
Unidentified voice:	The rest of them came.
Vaso Volioti:	Then, after the war the rest of them came here. On my father's side, his sister came here, but then after the kids finished college, they went back.
KM:	They went back.
Vaso Volioti:	And they're there now.
KM:	So, for the family that went back, did they go back to the North side, or —?
Vaso Volioti:	No, they did not go back to the North because the Turks invaded. So, now they went to, which side? They went to, um—?
Unidentified voice:	Lefkosia.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, Lefkosia.
KM:	Is it maybe, not—.
Unidentified voice:	Nicosea, the capital of Cyprus.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, the capital of Cyprus. Oh, it's right there.
KM:	Right in the middle.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, right in the middle.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	So, they went there, they lived there.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	And, they're doing well.
Learning English	
KM:	So, you brought up having English language teachers in Cyprus.
Vaso Volioti:	Ah, in Cyprus, in school, I remember we always had one hour of English.
KM:	Okay, is that—?
Vaso Volioti:	They have it—.
KM:	A holdover from the U.K. [United Kingdom]? From the occupation?
Vaso Volioti:	Yes. They always have that
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	So, I didn't know how to speak, you know, fluent English, but I—when we came here, we did know, table, chair, you know, these things.

KM:	Yeah, you knew the basic stuff.
Vaso Volioti:	The basic stuff.
KM:	And, the rules.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah.
<b>Going to School</b>	
KM:	Thanks to school. So, that's convenient. You learned it, ah, before you came here. So you came, you started school. Where'd you go to school in Alexandria?
Vaso Volioti:	I went to Grofton Elementary.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	That was on Memorial Street [in Fairfax County.]
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	The old Grofton Elementary.
KM:	I was going to say, I don't know where that is.
Vaso Volioti:	Okay, it used to be on Memorial Street and now, they put apartments there.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	And, after I went to Grofton Elementary on Memorial Street, I went to Bryant. Now it's, ah, what's the school you call today, high school?
John Voliotis:	West Potomac.
Vaso Volioti:	West Potomac.
John Voliotis:	It's West Potomac High School.
KM:	Oh, okay. West Potomac High School.
Vaso Volioti:	But, it was not West Potomac. It was, ah, what was the name of it before?
John Voliotis:	Wasn't it, ah, Grofton High School?
Vaso Volioti:	No, no. No, no; now I forgot what it's called. I went on Pumpkin Lane, that used to be the Grofton High School, on Pumpkin Lane.
John Voliotis:	That's where Bryant is now.
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, Bryant. Yeah, Bryant used to be where, ah—.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Where you used to go to high school.
John Voliotis:	Ah, Bryant was at West Potomac [High School].
Vaso Volioti:	West Potomac.
KM:	Wait, who's Bryant?
Unknown Voice:	Bryant, it's a—.

Vaso Volioti:	Bryant's the school, the name of the school.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, Bryant is the name of the school.
Vaso Volioti:	And then high school, I went to Grofton on Pumpkin Lane.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	The Tigers.
KM:	The tigers. Go tigers!
Protectiveness and Prom	
KM:	And then, after you graduated high school, what did you do after that?
Vaso Volioti:	Now, let me tell you. When you come here with old fashioned parents and all that stuff—. Not allowed to go out to any games, go to the movies, do activities after school, all that stuff.
KM:	No prom.
Vaso Volioti:	No. Oh my god, should I tell you about my prom?
KM:	Yes.
Vaso Volioti:	I got beat up.
KM:	You got beat up?
Vaso Volioti:	I will put it in a different way. Okay, let me tell you. So, we were not allowed to go to any games, any other stuff. We would get off from school, and we would go straight to work.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	[At] two thirty-five the bell would ring. Three [p.m.] we were at Andrea's restaurant, working to ten p.m.
KM:	Okay. Which is the one down in Fairfax, yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah. It doesn't exist there anymore, it's Five Guys [fast food restaurant] now.
KM:	Oh, okay.
John Voliotis:	It's on Route One.
Vaso Volioti:	Route One. So, we used to get off and go work there until ten p.m. and then go home, and—.
KM:	Right.
Vaso Volioti:	When it came to the prom time, okay, we decided to go. Me and my cousin, Yola, both same school and stuff so we said, we need to go. So, we need to tell them. They said, okay, you want to go? They picked the guys for us; guys that didn't even go to school with us.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	It was family friends, okay.
KM:	[laughs] Right, okay. Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	So, they were about ten years older and said, whatever, they wanted to take us so we would get home safe. We got home six o'clock in the morning.
KM:	[laughs] Of course.
Vaso Volioti:	The fruitcakes, they took us in [Washington] D.C., and didn't know how to come back out. What the—I don't know [unintelligible.] So, somehow we found out and we came home. Then, my cousin's father was sitting, everybody, the whole family. My uncle, my father, my



	mother, everyone was sitting there waiting for us.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	Until six o'clock in the morning.
John Voliotis:	[imposes] You got a good old-fashioned whooping.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Those days, they didn't have cell phones or all this stuff, you know?
KM:	Right, right.
Vaso Volioti:	And, we just kind of told the guys just to drop us off, and they took off, they didn't stay.
John Voliotis:	[laughs]
KM:	Oh, well, I'm not surprised because they probably didn't want to deal with your parents. [laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	So, no. But, I'm the only one who got beat up by my uncle. My uncle was you know, his daughter, and it was like—. So, I'm the one who got slapped. And then, my other uncle was saying, it's okay, it's going to be fine, don't take it, you know. And, we were telling them what happened, but even then they would not believe me.
KM:	Yeah. Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	And, that was the end of that.
KM:	[laughs]
<b>Turkish Invasion of Cyprus</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	And then we kept working until we took over Andrea's restaurant, my family did. And then, my uncle went back to Cyprus.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	And then—?
KM:	[imposes] Did he end up in—?
Vaso Volioti:	In Cyprus, he was here in, ah, Kyrenia.
KM:	Kyrenia?
Vaso Volioti:	Right here, Kyrenia.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	Right there. Before the Turks invaded Cyprus.
KM:	[imposes] Oh, Kyrenia. Right there, yeah?
Vaso Volioti:	Yes. Before the Turks invaded Cyprus, they all went back.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	They built their own restaurants.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	And, they were doing well and all this stuff, until 1974.
KM:	Until the invasion.
Vaso Volioti:	The invasion came, they saw the restaurant, they threw a bomb, and boom, they turn around

	they saw everything explode out.
KM:	Oh.
Vaso Volioti:	So—.
John Voliotis:	A lot of her family were—.
Vaso Volioti:	[imposes] They all came back. Including my brother, who came here.
KM:	The first one—.
Vaso Volioti:	He went back and he did his own thing there, he did television, fixing TVs, he was into this computer stuff. So, he went there too; took whatever he made here, built there [unintelligible] they all came back after [19]74.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	They got invaded—.
KM:	[imposes] Did they come in as refugees, or they just came in, like as family?
Vaso Volioti:	No, they came back as, uh, no.
KM:	Or, they had green cards in hand already.
Vaso Volioti:	They had green cards and—well, no. They had the American citizenship, and they came in with that.
KM:	Ah, okay.
Vaso Volioti:	So they came back again.
<b>High School Homework</b>	
KM:	So, I want to ask you about high school. When did you do your homework? If you were working starting at three p.m.? [laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Actually, it was kind of weird. Homework, I was not doing, I was just passing. Those days, the teachers did not really care.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	And, they were not really getting to you. I had a nice English teacher, but she was always after me and she was helping me.
KM:	Uh-huh.
Vaso Volioti:	But, at home, doing homework, I didn't have time for that because I had to work.
KM:	You were working.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, but that's okay.
John Voliotis:	And, they passed you without homework?
Vaso Volioti:	Most of the time, most of the classes, teachers liked me and they passed me on. Isn't it weird? [laughs]
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	[laughs]
KM:	It's okay, it works. It worked.
Vaso Volioti:	But, I went to a special, you know—. Besides high school, I went to another school for hair

	[cosmetology school.]
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	And, I did hair. I also took other classes for facials and stuff and I could do that, but I don't do it. I just cook.
KM:	So, you did that. What is it? Cosme—/
Vaso Volioti:	Cosmetology.
KM:	Cosmetology.
KM:	And then?
Vaso Volioti:	An esthetician.
KM:	And, an esthetician, but then you didn't go and work—?
Vaso Volioti:	Then, I went and I worked for one week and I said, that's not me. Out.
<b>Restaurant Work</b>	
KM:	[laughs] Okay. So, then you went and you worked at Andrea's?
Vaso Volioti:	No, no. Ah, I went—what did I do? I don't remember what I did. I work at Andrea's, that's the family. Then, my parents had their own restaurant, a steakhouse on Route One. We had the Doghouse, I'm talking now in the [19]70s.
KM:	That's fine.
<b>Mike's Italian Restaurant</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, and then I went. I found later I went away from the family because I was the black sheep in the family. So, I went to Mike's Italian restaurant.
KM:	Ah, okay. Up on Route One.
Vaso Volioti:	Up on Route One.
KM:	This way, right? [pointing]
Vaso Volioti:	That way.
KM:	Oh, wait.
Vaso Volioti:	South.
KM:	So, it's in Fairfax County.
Vaso Volioti:	South. No, it's on Richmond Highway too.
KM:	Oh.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, that's Fairfax County.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, Fairfax County, but that was the oldest restaurant on Route One.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	The first restaurant—they had Mike's Italian restaurant. So, I stayed there for the rest of the—.
KM:	[imposes] Twenty-six years, right?
Vaso Volioti:	Twenty-five years, twenty-six years.
KM:	Yeah.

<b>Johnny</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	And, then ah, kids got older, it was time for them—. This one, Johnny, wanted to go to be a, to video—.
John Voliotis:	I wanted to get into filmography, I wanted to, you know—I was on my way to go to New York. I was going to go to a film academy over there, and uh, she decided—.
Vaso Volioti:	And then he found a wife.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, he's trying to say—. But, see I didn't want him to go away because then, if they go away, you don't see your kids again.
KM:	Yeah, yeah.
<b>Dixie Pig and Vaso's Restaurant</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	And, then I said, "Let's go get a restaurant." [unintelligible] Me, my daughter, and my son.
KM:	Is that when you started—.
Vaso Volioti:	Dixie Pig.
KM:	Dixie Pig.
Vaso Volioti:	Yes.
KM:	What year was that? Two thousand—?
John Voliotis:	Well, at the Dixie Pig, March 23, 2006.
KM:	You got it down to the day.
John Voliotis:	I will never forget it.
KM:	[imposes] Oh, that was the day you opened.
John Voliotis:	That day we opened, the entire neighborhood walked in.
KM:	Showed up. [laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, my God.
John Voliotis:	It was only me, my wife, my mother, maybe two helpers in the kitchen—.
Vaso Volioti:	We were not expecting—.
John Voliotis:	And, we had, the entire restaurant seats fifty-eight, every seat was taken.
KM:	Yeah? That's great.
John Voliotis:	Ah, no table was set up with any silverware, glasses, nothing.
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	So, you know the first customer walks in—.
Vaso Volioti:	Because, okay. The reason was, we were ready, but we were not expecting so many people, because people were saying, oh, this place was never busy, it wasn't doing well.

John Voliotis:	We did not know what to expect.
KM:	Right.
Vaso Volioti:	Yes. It did get busy when it used to be the barbecue, but when the other guy had it, it didn't go well so, I say okay—.
KM:	[imposes] How long was it the Dixie Pig?
John Voliotis:	The Dixie Pig was, ah, late [nineteen] forties. Late forties, early fifties, from my understanding. Well, that building has been there since the 1920s.
KM:	Right.
John Voliotis:	And, it ah, first started out as a school for black children, boys.
KM:	Really?
John Voliotis:	During segregation days.
KM:	Really?
John Voliotis:	Yeah, after that, after segregation was uh—.
KM:	[imposes] Abolished. Yeah.
John Voliotis:	Abolished here then, it turned into a mom and pop style grocery store. It was called the Johnson Store, where they were selling beer, wine, and liquor illegally during prohibition days.
KM:	Nice. [laughs]
John Voliotis:	And, then after that it turned into the Dixie Pig Barbecue.
KM:	Okay.
John Voliotis:	Um. Willard Scott grew up in the area, so he used to go and—.
KM:	[imposes] Oh, I didn't know that.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, he used to go and get Dixie Pig barbecue and Frank Sinatra used to eat there. I got all this information from the fire marshal the day, right when we opened.
KM:	Oh, really. [laughs] I was like, how do you know this?
John Voliotis:	The day that we opened, lots of [unintelligible] neighbors, the fire marshal, he came in there and was like, let me tell you guys about this building, I want you to know what you guys are getting into here. He broke down the history and I thought it was—.
KM:	[imposes] Oh, that's cool.
John Voliotis:	It was fascinating. The Pig [sign and restaurant], it has been deemed a historic landmark.
KM:	Right.
John Voliotis:	By the neighborhood.
KM:	Right.

John Voliotis:	You know, which is awesome. I think it was also on, ah, the second season of West Wing. The assassin, I guess who was trying to kill the President in the show. He hid out in the Dixie Pig Barbecue.
KM:	[laughs] Oh.
John Voliotis:	That's pretty cool, there's a lot of little fun facts about that building. But, ah, the neighborhood really embraced us.
KM:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	When they saw the family committed to that place, because we were there probably more than the neighbors were there, they felt, it's comfortable for them.
KM:	Yeah, yeah.
John Voliotis:	They were happy a family was going back in there.
KM:	Yeah. Well, I always thought it was a great symbol of the new south, right?
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, because the guy—.
KM:	Immigrant family takes over the Pig.
John Voliotis:	Yeah?
Vaso Volioti:	Because, the previous guy who had it—.
John Voliotis:	The Greeks invaded the Pig.
	[general laughter]
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah. I always wanted to put a Greek captain hat on that pig.
KM:	Oh, I would be cool. I think it would be fun. Even just temporarily, see if anybody notices.
Vaso Volioti:	I'm sure they would. But, you know, people loved it because the previous guy, he never kept it clean, around it, nothing.
KM:	Oh, yeah. Well you have a nice garden.
Vaso Volioti:	And, we made it, [to] put pots and flowers. Brought it to life and people loved that.
John Voliotis:	Well, you know the neighborhood really embraced us when they saw how hard we worked. And, they saw, you know, that we're a family and we're trying to figure it out and get it. It's the first time we worked together to open a restaurant together. My mother had been in the restaurant business all her life. Me, I've been around them, eating in them, at my family's restaurants, but never really worked in it like my mom. So they saw us, we got our act together really quick.
KM:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	Because that first day, after those sixty people walked in there, we were like, unh-uh, the next day I set up every single table.
KM:	[imposes] Right, have all the setups done in advance, and—.
John Voliotis:	[imposes] Yeah. And, I comped maybe fifty percent of the meals that day. That night I gave fifty percent free meals.
KM:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	Okay, because of timing, but anyways, um—.

KM:	[imposes] But, that's part of the learning curve when you open a restaurant.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, and the neighborhood gave us you know—There is no outdoor seating allowed in that area, okay? There was none. They were like, you're not allowed to, it's written in the code of Alexandria, but the neighborhood has such pull with that location, ah, they really gathered behind us and said, you know what, we trust you.
KM:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	And, we know that you guys will. It has to be done the right way and they knew that we were going to do it the right way. I think, uh, they needed people that were like us, like our family. We grew up in a culture where you have to be involved with your community.
KM:	Right.
John Voliotis:	You know, because we're very social people.
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	We get involved with everybody's business anyways, you know? So, uh, they really allowed us to expand. And, my mother's cuisine, man, her food—.
KM:	I know.
John Voliotis:	That's why. That's what made that restaurant; they were like, wow, this food is awesome. And, they were happy. And, you know, I think they gave her what she wanted; they wanted us to stay there.
KM:	I know. I go. I like that place because I have small children, so it's pretty safe for them.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, it's nice.
KM:	My younger one's still picky, so—.
Vaso Volioti:	Do they like to sit outside or inside?
<b>Food</b>	
KM:	Either. They're very equal opportunity that way. Let's talk a little bit about food, since you brought up food. So, you weren't cooking Greek food in all these other restaurants before you opened up your own place, right? What were you cooking?
Vaso Volioti:	No, I was a waitress.
KM:	Oh, you waited tables.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, I was a waitress; I never was a cook. But, nobody knew that I knew how to cook because if I was going to let them know that I knew how to cook they would throw me in the kitchen.
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	So, I didn't want to get two dollars an hour. I wanted to go and get, you know, real money to support the family.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	But, then I was watching.
KM:	Right.
Vaso Volioti:	And, my food actually is not—I wouldn't call my food Greek food.

KM:	I was going to ask you.
Vaso Volioti:	I don't do Greek food. My food is mostly Italian.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	You know, because when I used to work for this Italian guy, I would always look, I would always go and help. I'm the type that, you know, okay I'm a waitress, but I—.
KM:	This is Mike, right?
Vaso Volioti:	Mike's restaurant.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	So, I was watching every step and all the stuff there. So, that's how I learned how to cook and then, I would come out with my own recipes.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	I would see what they do, but I would do my thing differently. Like, my boss used to make the tiramisu.
KM:	Right.
Vaso Volioti:	It would not taste like this. She would not put Frangelico [a hazelnut liqueur], she would just put like a little shot glass. I use two glasses.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Okay. That's how I do mine. And, then she does corn, yeah? She would barely put any. I would put nice [unintelligible]
John Voliotis:	She's very generous with her portions, on everything.
KM:	I know.
John Voliotis:	And people know that, and they come here and then—. My grandmother, her mother literally used to feed an army. She used to cook for the army.
John Voliotis:	She, my grandmother, her mother literally used to feed an army, she used to cook for the army.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	Okay, so we learned—.
KM:	Well, for the army or the family?
John Voliotis:	No, the army. No, the army in Cyprus, she used to literally cook for them.
KM:	Now, for the British army, or for the Cypriot?
John Voliotis:	No-no, for the Cypriot army. For the Greek Cypriot army.
KM:	Okay.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, [laughs] let's specify that.
KM:	[laughs] I'm cool with that, I just want to—we have multiple armies, we're in the mid-twentieth century, right? I mean, it's part of the problem. So, is any of your food would you say, Greek Cypriot? Like, home food, that you're bringing stuff that mom used to cook at



	home.
Vaso Volioti:	Like, the lamb kapama. Okay, let me give you an example, lamb kapama. The Greeks that I know of, they make it in a white sauce.
KM:	Um-hm.
Vaso Volioti:	Mine, I do it differently. I do it in a garlic tomato sauce, and people love it. It melts right off, you know? [unintelligible.] Um, I don't remember Cypriot food, I don't—.
John Voliotis:	[imposes] Halloumi, you do the halloumi sandwiches [halloumi is semi-hard cheese originally made in Cyprus].
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, yeah. I do the halloumi sandwiches, okay, yes. But, yeah but—.
John Voliotis:	Halloumi sandwich is like a—.
KM:	Yeah, your brother likes those halloumi sandwiches. [laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Yes, but the thing is—let me tell you, the Greek food, the kind that they have like, okay, green beans in a red tomato sauce with beef.
KM:	Right, okay.
Vaso Volioti:	Okay? That dish, you have to make it, and it sits on the steam table. I like to cook my food—.
John Voliotis:	To order.
Vaso Volioti:	To order.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	So, that's why I don't like to cook food that will sit on the steam table. I like to do food right then-and-there so it will be nice, fresh, and hot.
KM:	Fresh. Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	But, in fact yes, I can make the green beans with the beef and all this stuff, but I don't want to waste that food and just keep it until the next day. I don't like leftovers.
KM:	Right.
Vaso Volioti:	To reheat and do, I like to cook.
KM:	So, some of it's about process—.
Vaso Volioti:	Some of it, yes. I just like to have food that I'm going to cook right there-and-then.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	Like, all the pasta that I do. All the veal dishes that I will do. You know, the fresh fish that I will do. I make sure my fish is fresh and all this, I will not keep the fish more than four days to sell, but it goes, so, you know. [unintelligible.]
KM:	Okay. So, most of the dishes you think is a combination of what you were brought up with, what you learned from Mike, and then your own inspiration?
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, and then my own inspirations and I come up with my little ideas and I—. [unintelligible] I never went to school for cooking.
KM:	Right.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, but I, you know—.
KM:	You can be schooled in other ways though, right?

Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, by taste. [unintelligible]
KM:	Yeah, yeah. So, would you call the food you serve Greek food then?
Vaso Volioti:	No, I call it Mediterranean; everybody eats all these foods that I cook.
John Voliotis:	Although, she has—listen, I tell you, the menu—see, my mom, she gets the Mediterranean thing fine. Okay, like she's saying, it is Mediterranean, it's from that part of the world, but it's about ninety percent Italian, her food. Okay?
KM:	I was going to say, or is it just Vaso food?
John Voliotis:	She could do all Greek if she wanted to.
KM:	Um-hm.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, but I don't want to have a—.
John Voliotis:	But, she doesn't—. I think she enjoys cooking the Italian stuff, because the Greek stuff to her, I think in her mind, it's a lot more slow-cooked stuff, okay?
KM:	Um-hm.
John Voliotis:	Where like, she's saying you need to prepare it like the lamb shanks, uh, there's a certain dish—.
Vaso Volioti:	Moussaka, pastitsio, you know the—.
KM:	What is the chicken with the, the cheese and the ham?
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, the chicken [unintelligible.] But, see that I make it in order, it's done already. Everything, those dishes, I make it in order. But, like the moussaka, pastitsio, that I make it, but see, that I make it in order, it's done already, everything, those dishes, they, I make it in order. But like the moussaka, pastitsio, [unintelligible], all this stuff, these Greek dishes that we talk about you know? It's the kinds—.
John Voliotis:	The moussaka has to be cooked in bulk.
KM:	Right.
John Voliotis:	You have to cook big, you can't cook one piece and serve it.
Vaso Volioti:	Yes.
KM:	Right, you have to do a platter.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, that needs to be that way. If you're going to do anything that has to do with eggplant—.
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	Okay, a lot of the eggplant, a lot of it has to be cooked at one time so, if her menu was going to go all Greek, you're going to have these big pots, and these ovens filled with all this stuff going on—.
Vaso Volioti:	It's not that, I like fresh food, I don't like food that—.
John Voliotis:	She likes doing the pans, the burners.
Vaso Volioti:	Yes. I like—.
John Voliotis:	She likes being creative; she creates stuff all the time.

KM:	I know, well, that's why I was wondering if it's just, your food.
John Voliotis:	I think it's Greek influenced, although she takes a little bit, it's like a fusion.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, it's Greek, Italian, it's French, everything's in there, it's the same stuff. Like the pizza we sell, I could go and buy a frozen pizza brick, I could go ahead and buy the crust, but I don't, I make the pizza dough. And then, I don't buy canned tomato sauce, pizza tomato sauce. I use, you know, tomato sauce that I make for my dishes, and I use the fresh crushed tomatoes, and then it goes from there.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	I don't use canned green peppers that they have salt in, you know, they have those things.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	I get fresh peppers.
John Voliotis:	A lot of the Greek foods, the certain dishes, they take hours to cook.
KM:	Oh, I know they're time intensive.
John Voliotis:	Like the kapama, she makes it fresh every day, but she times it.
Vaso Volioti:	But, I do like seven, eight pieces.
KM:	What's Kapama? Just so we have—.
John Voliotis:	Lamb, the lamb, well that's, that's a piece—.
Vaso Volioti:	Lamb shank.
KM:	It's a lamb shank, okay.
John Voliotis:	It's a lamb shank, okay that she takes and it's boiled in tomatoes, slow-cooked in a big pot with a lot of—depending on how many pieces you want to cook.
Vaso Volioti:	It's very good.
John Voliotis:	It's slow cooking there for about four to five hours, and she times it to make sure that it's ready for dinner, okay? So, it's timed, if you are going to do a lot of the Greek stuff, you're going to need to time everything that way. And then, if the stuff doesn't sell, I'm sorry, I don't think anything is good the next day like that.
KM:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	Especially that kind of food. Lamb, you don't want to eat a lamb shank the next day that way. Um, the moussaka, you don't want to eat the moussaka that way the next day. So moussaka was one thing that we decided okay—.
Vaso Volioti:	[imposes] I didn't want to do it.
John Voliotis:	We're not making it, ah—.
Vaso Volioti:	[imposes] I don't make as much. I just make it every couple days
KM:	Do you do it like, as a special sometimes?
Vaso Volioti:	No. No, it's only—.
John Voliotis:	I told her I think that might be the best thing to do, but at the end of the day, that's a long process. That takes about three hours to just prepare. To cut the eggplants, slice the ground

	beef.
KM:	[laughs] I've done it once.
John Voliotis:	It's tough.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, for me it's not going to take three hours. But, you know, the process to do the ground beef and all the stuff they showed me how, and cook it. And, when it's very hot you cannot cook it because you know—.
John Voliotis:	You can't serve it, it'll fall apart, you need to let it settle and—.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, so it's too much.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	So, it's too much. I wanted to take it off, but—.
John Voliotis:	The Greek Cypriot dish that she does do is, I think pastitsio.
KM:	I have seen people eat it, for what it's worth, and they seem to like it a lot.
John Voliotis:	Pastitsio? Would you consider that Greek Cypriot, or would you consider that—?
Vaso Volioti:	That's Greek, Greek Cyprian, I think.
<b>Cyprus &amp; Greek Culture</b>	
KM:	Part of the reason why I'm asking is like, are there things that are Greek Cypriot versus Greek, right, or—?
John Voliotis:	Well, look. I'll give you an example. It's the same. The cultures are the same.
KM:	Okay.
John Voliotis:	Everything is the same, the dialect is different. It's like the people in the northern part of America and the people speaking a different dialect in the South.
KM:	Oh, yeah.
John Voliotis:	Okay. The only difference, the culture's exactly the same. There are little differences because Cyprus is an island that has been occupied for thousands of years by different countries, but the people that have always been there have been the Greeks, okay. But, it's a strategic island.
KM:	I know.
John Voliotis:	And, I don't mean to quote a madman like Hitler, but—.
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	Like Hitler said, you know, it's the jewel of the Mediterranean for a reason. Because, strategically it's in the center of everything.
Vaso Volioti:	Everybody wants a piece of it.
John Voliotis:	And, that island especially today.
KM:	[interrupts] They sort of carved it up.
John Voliotis:	Today, let's say how strategic it is. Okay, because of the technology now, anyone can sit in

otis:	their basement in any part of the world, with the internet and with wifi.
KM:	You have access.
<b>More thoughts about food</b>	
John Voliotis:	Everything, yeah, you know, ah, it's a little different. But, I'll give you an example, um, barbecue. You have Texas barbecue, you have, ah—.
KM:	[interrupts] North Carolina, you have Korean barbecue.
John Voliotis:	Exactly. So, like you have a Greek, you have a traditional Greek chicken souvlaki sandwich.
KM:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	In Cyprus, they do it a little bit differently. Ah, the Greeks, souvlaki, it's on a stick and they just give you a piece of bread. If you go to Greece, that's a souvlaki to them. In Cyprus, they take the pocket pita, they put the, ah—.
Vaso Volioti:	Cilantro, onions, tomato, cucumber, oh, it's really good.
John Voliotis:	It's different. The flavor of that—.
Vaso Volioti:	Olive oil, lemons [unintelligible] you slap it in there, but they don't use chicken, actually.
John Voliotis:	Pork.
Vaso Volioti:	It's pork.
KM:	Ahh.
Vaso Volioti:	But, it's not the pork tenderloin, it's the pork that has the fat in it because it's nice. I make it here sometimes, but for the employees.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, the fat is where all the flavor comes from and it's salted and it's so good. I want her to do more stuff like that here, but I don't think she wants to do that yet.
<b>Restaurant Business</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	Getting too old for this job, I'm giving up. No, I'm not giving up.
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	No. Eventually, listen, the ultimate goal here—she needs to keep the cuisine, ah, in good hands of somebody that can actually do it the way she does it, and that's where she's stubborn.
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	When she saying she's giving up? No, she wants to find the right person in order to—yeah.
KM:	To mentor?
John Voliotis:	Well, look—.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah. It takes a long time.
John Voliotis:	I know her food better than anybody, but ultimately at the end of the day, I can't be out in the front and the back. So, eventually I'd like to transition to where I can get in there and she can be in the front.
Vaso Volioti:	I'm going teach my daughter in law to be in the kitchen with me.

KM:	Oh, look at you. [laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	[laughs] There she is. I'll teach her how to do it.
Daughter in law:	[laughs] No.
KM:	You can add a little Hawaiian to it. [laughs]
Daughter in law:	It is hard work, I see all of it. [laughs]
KM:	So, I have other questions but I definitely wanted to talk food since this is what you guys do for a living, but it's also really important in terms of heritage, and how people stay connected to who they are and where they've come from and whatnot, but there are other things that are on our honey-do list of questions.
<b>Greek Orthodox Church</b>	
KM:	I wanted to talk to you a little bit about the Greek Orthodox church.
Vaso Volioti:	Huh.
KM:	[laughs] And, whether or not you're involved in the local church. I know they tried to set up a mission here in Alexandria, in the [19]80s, and whether or not, you know, you were involved or joined—?
Vaso Volioti:	No, let me tell you, okay—.
KM:	[imposes] Uh, did festivals and things like that?
Vaso Volioti:	Festivals, okay. The church, I'm not involved, don't have time, honey, I don't have time.
KM:	I understand.
Vaso Volioti:	And, the priest was here on Sunday and he came in the kitchen and he blessed [unintelligible.] But I donate to the church.
KM:	Right.
Vaso Volioti:	Like all this olive oil when they do festivals.
KM:	Um-hm.
Vaso Volioti:	We give them like five, there's a, five gallons, five buckets.
John Voliotis:	They're a—.
KM:	[imposes] Do you import your olive oil?
Vaso Volioti:	I make my olive oil dressing, I do my house dressing.
KM:	Oh, your house dressing, yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	I give them my house dressing.
KM:	My daughter licks that off the plate.
Vaso Volioti:	And I do five gallons.
KM:	She likes it so, she doesn't even want the salad part, she just wants to lick your dressing. [laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Dressing, yeah.
<b>Saint Catherine's Church</b>	
John Voli-	Well, that church, the church that we grew up in was Saint Katherine's Greek Orthodox

otis:	Church. Okay, they've been here for a long time.
KM:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	My mother was married there. Okay.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	[unintelligible]
John Voliotis:	I was baptized there. My wife was baptized there. My son was baptized there, I was married there, all my family, in this area, that is our church.
KM:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	And, we've been going there since I was born. I'm first generation, but they've been going since, also, when they got here.
KM:	Yeah, do you know how old Saint Katherine's is?
John Voliotis:	I don't know how old, but I'm pretty sure it's been here for a while.
Vaso Volioti:	It's very old.
<b>Family History</b>	
KM:	I mean I know your family, I think I've tracked your family, in terms of Royal Café all the way back to the 1930s actually, through the census data.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, my uncle, yeah.
KM:	So, Euripides in the [nineteen] fifties.
Vaso Volioti:	We did go back, way back.
KM:	Um-hm.
Vaso Volioti:	And, I don't know [unintelligible]
John Voliotis:	He's still, he's still around. And, you know his breakfast, people love it.
KM:	I have been to that breakfast. They do Girl Scout stuff there.
John Voliotis:	They, ah, they love him, they love Charlie. A lot of people—.
Vaso Volioti:	He still works. He's my father's age, and he's telling—.
John Voliotis:	Late seventies?
Vaso Volioti:	No, he's eighty-three.
John Voliotis:	Is he eighty-three?
Vaso Volioti:	He used to go to school with my dad in Cyprus. With the—.
KM:	So is he from the same village?
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, he's from the same, ah, village we are. He tells me stories with him and my dad.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	My dad, now he's very sick; he has Alzheimer's and it's kind of—.
KM:	Oh.

Vaso Volioti:	Hard to see it.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	It's hard.
KM:	It's hard.
Vaso Volioti:	It's tough.
<b>Greek Restaurants in Alexandria</b>	
KM:	Are all the restaurants owned by Greek Cypriots here in Alexandria?
Vaso Volioti:	Okay.
KM:	Yeah?
John Voliotis:	All of the, ah, well, not all the restaurants. Vermillion's owned by [unintelligible.]
KM:	Well, you know what I mean. But, is there a large contingency of Greek Cypriots who own restaurants here in Alexandria? And, they're from Cyprus, as opposed to other islands.
John Voliotis:	The only restaurants that I know, which is my aunt Denise and my uncle Chris. They own Taverna Cretekou.
KM:	Yup.
John Voliotis:	Okay, ah, they are—.
KM:	Which has been here since the seventies.
John Voliotis:	Since the seventies, opened by [unintelligible] who's from the island of Crete.
KM:	Okay.
John Voliotis:	Ah, now, my uncle Chris, same thing. It's like my mom, American dream, you come here with nothing and then you build something for yourself. He started at that restaurant as a busboy, a waiter to, the maître d', to the manager, bought it. Start from the bottom, you buy the place that you started out with, okay. And, I think the Old Town Crier did a nice story on him a few years ago. But those are the only two restaurants that I know that's owned by—in Old Town Alexandria, on King Street. I know there's another Greek restaurant on, ah, Crystal Drive. That's Athena's Pallas, but I think they're from Sparta, I believe.
KM:	Uh, and then Atlantis, right?
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, no, he's not from—He is—.
KM:	He's Greek?
Vaso Volioti:	He's Greek.
John Voliotis:	Delia's. Delia's on Eisenhower, that's owned by a Greek Cypriot.
KM:	Oh, okay.
John Voliotis:	You know, he has one in Springfield and he opened up the one next to the Hoffman Center. That—.
KM:	Okay. Yeah, yeah.
John Voliotis:	His son owns that one, they're Greek Cypriot.



<b>Other Family-Owned Businesses in the Area</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	Then my sister, my other sister, she owns four retail stores.
John Voliotis:	Retail shops.
KM:	This is not Denise.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, not Denise, Andrea.
Vaso Volioti:	Andrea.
KM:	She has the, the Knot?
Vaso Volioti:	The Lucky Knot.
KM:	Oh, the Lucky Knot.
Vaso Volioti:	Three Sisters.
KM:	Oh, I know where that is, yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	And, Andrea's Boutique.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	That's my sister.
KM:	Way down on that end of King Street.
Vaso Volioti:	And then Kathy Bradford, with her husband. Ah, King's Jewelry Store?
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	That's been there for years and years.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	That's another one.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	But then, that's it.
KM:	Okay.
John Voliotis:	You know, our family—which is very interesting—all of them, well, a couple of them own heating and air conditioning companies, a few of them do construction.
KM:	Is that your brother?
Vaso Volioti:	Who?
KM:	Who does heating and air?
John Voliotis:	Cousin.
Vaso Volioti:	That's my cousin.
John Voliotis:	Cyprus Heating and Air Conditioning.
Vaso Volioti:	First cousin. First cousins.
KM:	Okay. And, your brother works construction?
John Voliotis:	Kolas.

otis:	
Vaso Volioti:	My brother, Kolas Painting, yeah, he has a big construction—.
John Voliotis:	Kolas Contracting.
KM:	Was he the one you make the halloumi sandwich?
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah. He's, ah—.
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	And, then [unintelligible] which is also the family of the sister Andrea, who owns the Lucky Knot and Three Sisters—.
KM:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	Ah, he's had a painting company here since, ah, I believe the early sixties. He painted the Capitol, the White House.
KM:	Oh, really?
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, he did.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, he painted the Capitol building, and I tell you, I remember going in their offices and I would see the scaffolding going in and he was painting the dome. The gold leaf stuff on there that, you know. He's been around for a very-very long time also. So, growing up in a family like them, they're hard-working people.
<b>Small Business Ownership</b>	
KM:	Yeah. Small business ownership seems to be a common theme too, right? Um, it seems, that everybody wants to own their own business.
Vaso Volioti:	Yes.
John Voliotis:	Well, you know Greek history.
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	You had all the Greek city states that used to fight and kill each other, they were all bosses. Same thing goes for the people, they don't want to work for anybody, they want—.
KM:	They want to work for themselves.
Vaso Volioti:	Most of us, we own our own business.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	My cousin owns a gas station, my other cousin owns another restaurant on Route One, you know, on-and-on. We don't know anybody working for somebody, except the young generation, they go to college and they become—/
KM:	Right.
Vaso Volioti:	They go to—.
KM:	[imposes] Just like second—.
Vaso Volioti:	Nine to five jobs.
<b>Second Generation Definition</b>	
KM:	Second and third generation, it's—.
John Voliotis:	Well, second generation has now started, there's no third generation.

KM:	No third yet?
John Voliotis:	No. It's all second, so like my son. I'm first generation.
KM:	Oh, so you were born?
John Voliotis:	I was born here.
KM:	That makes you second generation.
John Voliotis:	Really?
KM:	Um-hm. Your mom's first generation.
John Voliotis:	How, if she was born in Cyprus?
KM:	Because, she became a U.S. Citizen.
John Voliotis:	Oh, that's how it goes, okay.
KM:	Yeah. The Japanese have it down well.
	[general laughter]
KM:	Ah, Issei, Nisei, Sansei, which means first generation, second generation, third generation.
John Voliotis:	Oh, I always interpreted that we were the first born here so we were the first generation, it's actually from the—okay.
KM:	I know. That's sort of the popular sense of it, but it starts with the immigrant generation.
John Voliotis:	Wow. Wow, that's interesting.
<b>Gaining Citizenship</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, when I got my American citizenship it was on Washington Street.
KM:	Um-hm.
Vaso Volioti:	Was it a post office there? The post office was there.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	That's where everybody would go and swear—.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	That's when I got my—.
KM:	[imposes] So, when did you naturalize? And does—?
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, my God. When I got married my husband [he] pushed me fast to go and get my citizenship, so—.
KM:	Was he Greek Cypriot too?
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	So he could get his [unintelligible].
John Voliotis:	No, he's not Greek Cypriot. He's Greek.

otis:	
Vaso Volioti:	He's Greek.
John Voliotis:	He's from the mainland.
KM:	Oh, he's from the mainland, okay.
Vaso Volioti:	He's from the, yeah, but I found him on the main land, in America.
KM:	Okay. [laughs] So, a lot of Greeks though maintain dual citizenship, right? And, do you have dual citizenship?
John Voliotis:	I don't, I only have a United States citizenship.
Vaso Volioti:	I do.
KM:	You do.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, I did mine now, I have my Cypriot, and I have my American citizenship.
John Voliotis:	But, as you know, every time I visit—.
Vaso Volioti:	But, when I travel I always use my American, I just have that, just for, you know.
<b>Vacation House on Cyprus</b>	
KM:	Do you go back to Cyprus?
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, I went in January just to relax for two weeks. I went home, I have a house at the beach.
KM:	You do? Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	After they invaded, we went and I bought a house, ah, where's Ayia Napa, can you see it here?
John Voliotis:	Yeah, ah, Ayia Napa is right over here.
KM:	Sort of near the, the U.K. Section?
John Voliotis:	No-no-no, it's the South-Eastern part of the island, okay, which—.
John Voliotis:	Paralimni, it's around here where Paralimni is, around that area.
Vaso Volioti:	Okay, Paralimni's, yeah, it's right here, that's where it is.
John Voliotis:	Right there, there it is, Ayia Napa.
KM:	Is it this?
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, okay.
KM:	See, different maps have different cities.
Vaso Volioti:	Okay walking distance, my house is walking distance to the beach.
John Voliotis:	Ayia Napa is like the Miami Beach for the Europeans, they go there and party.
Vaso Volioti:	Yes. But, the reason I went this close, I do not like to drive in Cyprus, they drive on the opposite side and I—.

KM:	Oh, is that because of the British? [laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah. Yeah, when the British were there. So, it's nice to walk around, it's perfect.
KM:	Yeah. Do you go every year?
Vaso Volioti:	In my dreams.
KM:	Okay. [laughs]
John Voliotis:	No, she's going to get there.
Vaso Volioti:	I want to, yes, I'm going to try.
KM:	Do you want to retire there? Do you ever want to retire?
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, see, I don't know if I see myself retiring, but I would not work as hard.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	But yes, I will be spending time there. See, I like to take my grandchildren in the summer-time, go to Greece. Cyprus.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	And then, let them walk.
<b>Greek School</b>	
KM:	Do you want to take your grandchildren there to also learn the language, or do they go to Greek school?
Vaso Volioti:	See, I took them once—.
John Voliotis:	[imposes] They started and they're—.
Vaso Volioti:	I took them, I took them, and they love it. They always look forward to—.
KM:	[imposes] Going.
Vaso Volioti:	I'm going to try my best and take them this summer before schools open, maybe I will make him go. But, my dream is for me to take the grandchildren there so they can learn the culture and learn how to talk, and all this. And, it's nice to love two countries.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	I think it is nice.
KM:	Yeah. And, it promotes a certain cosmopolitanism and worldliness too.
Vaso Volioti:	Of course.
KM:	Did you do Greek school?
Vaso Volioti:	Yes, I used to have a teacher come to the house, I would get all the cousins together, instead of driving the kids to Saint Katherine's church, I would have the teacher.
KM:	Oh, yeah. Is that in Falls Church?
John Voliotis:	Yes.
KM:	Okay, I know where it is, okay.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah. I used to come and get [unintelligible] Sophia, teach all the cousins Greek.
KM:	And did you learn how to write as well as to read?

John Voliotis:	Yes.
KM:	My kids are doing the same thing, so—.
<b>Difficulty of Teaching Third Generation Children Greek</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	But, this generation, their kids—.
John Voliotis:	It's a little harder. And, actually you know why it's a little harder for me to teach my son? You know, I'd like to put him in Greek school, which I did try, I need to push a little harder. This restaurant takes so much of our time.
KM:	Oh, yeah.
John Voliotis:	We're here all the time. And, you know my wife, she doesn't speak the language either, so, you know—. I married somebody who is a non-Greek, but who is also trying to learn it, because she's around it a lot. She understands a lot of it, you know, things here and there, but when our child is with us, I'm speaking English to my wife.
KM:	Right.
John Voliotis:	You know, and then when I try to speak Greek to my son, ah, it's a little bit hard. If you have the time, great, but when you're trying to get things done quickly, and I'm trying to speak it to him in Greek, and he's not understanding, I have to get to the point.
KM:	Right.
John Voliotis:	It takes a lot, it takes a lot of effort.
KM:	Yeah. Oh, I know.
John Voliotis:	If me and my wife were speaking Greek, it'd be very different, because he'd be, that's it.
KM:	Ah, in the household, if that was the <i>lingua franca</i> of the household.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, that's how I learned, I mean, ah, my first language was Greek.
KM:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	All of my generation, second generation—.
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	Was Greek.
KM:	Right, because that's what you learn at home, particularly when you're little.
<b>Vacationing on Cyprus and Cultural Differences</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	[imposes] No, but every year—.
KM:	[imposes] You went back to Cyprus?
Vaso Volioti:	Most of the time, back to Greece.
John Voliotis:	And, every summer of my life. I was fortunate, I was the luckiest kid, all of us were—.
Vaso Volioti:	[imposes] I used to send them.
John Voliotis:	We'd be in there for three months, every time, back to Greece, every summer. So we got to

otis:	do that.
KM:	[imposes] You are lucky.
John Voliotis:	But, we had family still there, you know, it was, ah, it's a lot easier. It was easier when you have family there.
Vaso Volioti:	For the kids, you know it's peaceful, they're there.
KM:	And, so you just did your summer?
Vaso Volioti:	Not me.
KM:	Vacation there, basically?
John Voliotis:	Every summer, for three months we used to go.
Vaso Volioti:	I used to send them. I used to stay here.
John Voliotis:	I mean, you looked forward to it, you know?
Vaso Volioti:	I would stay here and take care of the bills and everything else.
John Voliotis:	It was a very, very different world. I mean, being here, going to school, and then going to Greece and Cyprus, it was like, oh my God. This is like Disney World for, you know? The rules there are so different, they're so laid back and lenient, I think young adults become adults quicker over there because there's more freedom.
KM:	Right.
John Voliotis:	Here there's a lot of restrictions on—.
KM:	Helicopter parenting.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, but I understand why. Over there, they still have sort of a village mentality, of a closeness, you know, so they trusted. I used to remember being at my—.
KM:	And, they watched out for everybody's kids, right?
John Voliotis:	I used to be at my dad's village, we used to sleep with the doors open.
KM:	Yeah.
John Voliotis:	You know? And, just trust.
Vaso Volioti:	Try and do that now.
John Voliotis:	Now, it's changed. It's not the same way.
KM:	Here or in Cyprus?
Vaso Volioti:	No, there too now. Everything's changed.
John Voliotis:	Both, everywhere now.
<b>Problems in Greece Today</b>	
KM:	How has it changed in Cyprus?
Vaso Volioti:	Because, once they opened the—.
John Voliotis:	Once they turned to the Euro and the borders opened anyone can go in, there's a lot more, ah

otis:	danger because—.
KM:	Is it because of immigration or tourism, or—?
John Voliotis:	It's because of illegal immigrants, also coming from, ah, the eastern part of the world. First place they stop off is Athens. I mean you can check those statistics as well.
KM:	Oh, yeah.
John Voliotis:	A lot of the people that are trying to get out of, ah, you know, third world countries that are farther east.
KM:	Or, are coming out of the civil war, right in Syria, I can imagine.
John Voliotis:	Yeah, and they're coming straight up. First place they hit, Athens. And, a lot of them end up staying there, because they have a good time, you know? It's just sad that we have this going on.
KM:	Right.
John Voliotis:	Okay, not just for Greece, all over the world. You don't want to see this kind of stuff, you know.
KM:	Right.
<b>Turkish Invasion of Cyprus</b>	
John Voliotis:	But, ultimately growing up and having that kind of life where, you know, my mother, and my father, and her parents taught us the history of where we came from, like it was embedded in us. And, letting us know, I don't want to say a hatred for Turkey, but they did. They got kicked out of their homes, a lot of them were still in the wars, and the bombs going off and they ended up coming over here you know, my mother's cousin they hid in caves. Because, overnight—.
KM:	[imposes] In the mountains?
John Voliotis:	It was overnight, straight, overnight. All of sudden, you see parachutes dropping straight up in the middle of the night. A lot of the family members were missing and dead too, that they hadn't found yet.
Vaso Volioti:	But, I remember watching it here, on TV. They were showing the Turkish ships going into Kyrenia. That's what they're saying.
KM:	Where's Kyrenia? Oh, Kyrenia. Right, where your family is from.
John Voliotis:	Kyrenia's in the northern part of Cyprus.
Vaso Volioti:	Where they were yeah—Karavas, see Karavas? This one has Karavas, here.
KM:	Yeah, this map has more precision, but this has bigger type.
John Voliotis:	This has bigger letters.
Vaso Volioti:	It's not bigger letters, they have, the bigger thing, okay. But, right there, Karavas. And they were coming from here, Kyrenia's six mile beach right here.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	That's when the big ships—. And, I remember seeing it on TV. They say, you know—.
KM:	Did your parents talk about it at all?
Vaso Volioti:	Of course, we called them to let them know hey, here in America, they're showing the ships, they're coming. "Oh, it's nothing, don't worry about it at all." But, we called them.



KM:	Oh, so was your mom and dad in—.
Vaso Volioti:	No, they were here. We all came here.
John Voliotis:	No one is really over it. This is still a topic, hot topic for all of us here.
Vaso Volioti:	We all still having dreams that we're going to go back and take the land that they took, but it [unintelligible.]
John Voliotis:	You know, certain things when I went and visited there the first time I saw that the graveyard, the Greek Cypriot graveyard was, graves turned over, broken tombstones because people went there to go and find their relatives—.
Vaso Volioti:	[imposes] I went there.
John Voliotis:	And, right next to it, it's the Turkish graveyard site right next to the Greek Cypriot graveyard site. Everything is in line, beautiful flowers. Somebody that went there I remember five years ago when they tried to piece together the tombstones they got arrested and they threw him in jail. They don't want anybody touching or cleaning up that gravesite as a memory.
KM:	Oh.
John Voliotis:	When you first land into the island of Cyprus from Larnaca Airport—.
KM:	Okay.
John Voliotis:	Right when you getting on the main road, the first thing you see from the northern part on the highest part of the mountain in big huge stones is the Turkish flag and it's showing down to the Greek people like, we're here, you know.
Vaso Volioti:	It's really sad.
John Voliotis:	It's a bit, I want to compare it to the Palestinian and Israeli situation, okay?
KM:	Yeah, an occupation.
John Voliotis:	Yes, but, at the same time, their hatred for the Turkish people.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, because—.
John Voliotis:	Is, it's, ah, the ones that are here. The ones that are over there, it's died down a little bit.
KM:	Right.
John Voliotis:	The borders are open. But—.
KM:	Well, it's a lived, sort of, they have to deal with it day to day.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, but the one that killed me the most is when I went for the first time, because before they opened the borders for the Cypriots to go on the other side. Because I was an American citizen, I was allowed to go.
KM:	Right.
Vaso Volioti:	On the other side where I was born and stuff. So, it killed me when I went to the churches. The church that I used to go to, they had the animals living in there. Horses and all this. All the pictures, everything that the church had, I mean, everything was gone. And, you see the poops from the donkeys and stuff. But, on the Cyprian side of the Turkish, they had the monuments, what are they?

John Voliotis:	Mosques.
KM:	Mosques.
Vaso Volioti:	The mosques, they had everything nice clean, and kept everything painted and all this—.
John Voliotis:	Well, it's the same thing they sort of did with the Hagia Sofia in, ah—.
KM:	Istanbul.
John Voliotis:	Istanbul. Which is a Greek word, by the way. [laughter]
Vaso Volioti:	You take care of ah, yeah—we, we respect their stuff, at least God's stuff. They should have done the same thing to our churches, and kept them nice and everything, but no, they wrecked everything. Windows out, pictures out, and you see the stones that they make in the old days, the church—.
KM:	The mosaic?
Vaso Volioti:	The mosaics in there, everything was like, knocked out.
KM:	So, you're talking about how people here.
Vaso Volioti:	[imposes] Not here.
KM:	Here in the United States, concerned with—.
Vaso Volioti:	No, ah, no, no. I'm telling you about the ones in Cyprus.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	The Turks that came, when they went there and all this stuff. Because, uhm, when I went there [in]'75, I went to my house.
KM:	Um-hm.
Vaso Volioti:	And, I knocked at the door and I said, ah, I'm so-and-so, can I just see the house that I was born in? The people were very nice; they let me in. But, those are the Turkish Cyprians.
KM:	Right.
Vaso Volioti:	The other house that we had, they were Turks from Turkey. They wouldn't even let you see the house.
KM:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	Some of the Turkish Cyprians, they were holding framed wedding pictures for the people that were there before. And, when they went back, when they opened the gates
John Voliotis:	[imposes] The gates. Borders.
Vaso Volioti:	Gates and the borders to go, they gave them the wedding pictures. That happened to my cousin, they gave them the stuff that they left behind, yeah.
KM:	Held on to them.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, they were holding on to them.
<b>Thoughts on Enosis</b>	
KM:	Do you think uh, independent Cyprus or you think enosis, right, the idea that Cyprus becomes part of Greece, right?
John Voliotis:	For me?

otis:	
KM:	Yeah. Or, your mom? [laughs]
John Voliotis:	My father, well, my mother, she might have a different view on this which you know, everyone has their opinion on it.
KM:	Is the word enosis?
John Voliotis:	Well, the gnosis in Greek means knowledge.
KM:	Okay.
John Voliotis:	So, gnosis means knowledge in Greek, so I—.
KM:	I'm trying to remember, there's a term about this movement in the mid twentieth century about unifying Cyprus with Greece, um and—.
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, yeah, with the Makarios and all this stuff.
KM:	Yeah, yeah, yeah. See, I'm trying to remember what the term was.
Vaso Volioti:	I don't know, I was very young. I don't know, I just—.
John Voliotis:	Well, personally, my father's from the mainland, my mother's from the island. I have the best of both worlds.
KM:	Right.
John Voliotis:	I look—look, ah, the history, Aphrodite was born there, okay. If you start looking at thousands, and thousands, and thousands of years ago you're going to see the history, and the monuments, and the temples, and just—. The culture has always stayed Greek. The language there has been Greek, the religion there, it's Greek Orthodox, you know? But the Greeks I think predate everyone over there. I believe in my heart of hearts that Cyprus should be unified with Greece, but they are doing fine on their own.
KM:	Right. They could be independent.
Vaso Volioti:	Independent.
John Voliotis:	They are doing fine on their own, and you know what? It's split in Cyprus; you have half the people saying they want independence, you have the other half saying that they should be a part of Greece.
KM:	Right.
John Voliotis:	Some people say no, we're Cypriots, you know.
KM:	It's like Puerto Rico actually.
John Voliotis:	Yeah.
KM:	Puerto Rico plays out this way where one third wants to be independent, one wants to stay the same, there's a—.
John Voliotis:	In a sense, but you know it all clearly comes down to, it's the same people. It's the same language, it's the same culture, it's the same history, it's the same everything. I mean, it's the same family values, it's the same name. People from the island of Crete? I'll tell you right now, they're the toughest Greeks you're going to probably find.
KM:	[laughs]
John Voliotis:	Anytime, anytime that there's any—the people from Crete, look, we got our own culture

otis:	from the Minoans. You know what I'm saying? They're tied to their roots and they're tied to their history so, they consider themselves a different type of Greek. The people from the Peloponnese, like the Spartans, that still is a big mentality with a lot of Greek people, "What part of Greece you're from?"
KM:	Right, exactly. That's part of the reason why I was asking about—.
John Voliotis:	But, they're all—.
KM:	Like, sometimes it will be just the island you're from, right, is your identity.
John Voliotis:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	No.
KM:	Or, Macedonia, or, you know Athens or Sparta, right, it just depends.
<b>DNA Heritage Testing</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	[laughs] I will know actually.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	You know what I went and I did? I went and I did that National Geographic?
KM:	Oh yeah, that—.
Vaso Volioti:	I went and I did that DNA thing.
KM:	DNA, did you do the—?
Vaso Volioti:	I did the swab.
KM:	The swab.
John Voliotis:	The results didn't come back yet.
Vaso Volioti:	But, I didn't get the results. I don't know what it is yet.
KM:	You'll have to tell me.
Vaso Volioti:	Maybe I'm a—.
KM:	I just did it for the first time too.
John Voliotis:	Some relatives are scared. [laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, I know. Oh, you did?
KM:	Yeah. Because my husband wanted to know. Because my family's all mixed up, so he wanted—.
John Voliotis:	You wanted a breakdown, they do. They'll give you a breakdown.
KM:	Yeah, I was curious. Well, because my family has stories, and we can't tell if they're true or not. [laughs]
John Voliotis:	Oh, it's like where you guys came from and how you got there.
KM:	Right, because, yeah.

<b>Grandparents</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	But, see I know my grandparents from Cyprus go way back, but—.
KM:	[imposes] Did you live with your grandparents?
Vaso Volioti:	It was, you know—.
KM:	[imposes] You had multiple generations in the same house?
Vaso Volioti:	No.
KM:	Okay.
<b>Chickens</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	Because, we had wealth there. We had a house and we had the farm. We had the chickens, and oh God, I used to love—.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	You know, somebody would get married and they would go to my mom and say, ah, we will need like, thirty chickens, for those days. I was always looking forward to getting my knife and going after those chickens.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, no.
KM:	[laughs] You liked to kill the chickens?
John Voliotis:	We didn't know better.
Vaso Volioti:	And, I'd kill them. I used to—. I was like nine, ten years old.
KM:	You didn't do it.
Vaso Volioti:	No, I used to step on their feet, and I would pull the head and I'd—.
KM:	Oh, wow.
<b>Killing Lambs for Easter</b>	
John Voliotis:	My father used to bring the live lambs in the back yard and him and his friends used to kill them there.
Vaso Volioti:	For Easter.
John Voliotis:	For Easter, you know, and it's sad.
Vaso Volioti:	Here, in America we would do that. And, then my little niece, she was seven, she's still a vegetarian.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	She doesn't eat.
John Voliotis:	Because she saw that, and it's, yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	She was like seven, eight years old and she's still a vegetarian.
<b>Parents' Occupations</b>	
KM:	Were your parents farmers?
Vaso Volioti:	Well, my mother was the bread-maker. She would buy land, and do this, and that. You un-

	derstand what I'm saying [unintelligible]
KM:	Yeah, like a baker, or—.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, my father used to work for, how do you say it? [unintelligible]
John Voliotis:	Radio. Radio station.
Vaso Volioti:	Radio, yes, for the English.
KM:	Oh, for the British.
John Voliotis:	Radio broadcasting.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, British, he used to work down there.
Vaso Volioti:	But, my mother used to—.
KM:	Did he speak on the radio, or—?
Vaso Volioti:	No, no, no. He was one of the—. I don't know what the hell he was, I mean I don't know exactly what his job was in there, but I know he used to work down there.
<b>Grandparents' Occupations</b>	
KM:	Okay. And, then your grandparents, what did they—?
Vaso Volioti:	My grandparents, they were here, they came here.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	My mother's side, they came here. Because they used to make bread, homemade bread. The old-fashioned way, by hand and all this, and feed the whole village.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	And, then my—.
KM:	[imposes] Wait, did your grandparents come before you came?
Vaso Volioti:	Yes. They were here before.
KM:	Oh, okay. Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah. They came and then they went back, and then my grandfather passed away there.
John Voliotis:	Isn't your great grandfather, ah, Andronikas' father; isn't he from Athens?
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah. He's Athens, yeah.
John Voliotis:	So, he's from the mainland too.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, the mainland too.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	And, then my father's side of the—my grandparents, they were alive for a long time. And, then my grandfather used to own a grocery store.
KM:	Oh, okay, he owned a grocery store.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, yeah. My grandmother never worked.
KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	She was [unintelligible]

KM:	A lot of kids, right.
<b>Photos of How the Family Has Grown</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, yeah. Oh, do I have a picture? My father [unintelligible]
KM:	There's a photo downstairs, right? Above the bar?
Vaso Volioti:	No. I want to show you these, I really would. My father, he says I want a picture of my grandchildren.
KM:	[imposes] Is this the one from—? I saw photos, like the—.
John Voliotis:	This is three weeks, about a month ago.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah.
KM:	Before Easter.
John Voliotis:	That is just—.
Vaso Volioti:	Just my—.
John Voliotis:	Her mother, her father. What they produced.
KM:	[laughs] The whole extended family, right?
John Voliotis:	Yeah, with their children, and their children, and all the extended family, it's a big group. And a few of them weren't able to make it.
KM:	And, this photo behind the bar downstairs, right, of—?
John Voliotis:	That is my mom, and a couple of her siblings, and a couple of her cousins.
KM:	In Cyprus, right?
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah.
KM:	I'll probably need to take a picture of that.
Vaso Volioti:	Ah, how do I get my things from here? This crazy thing here, I want to get my photos.
KM:	[laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	Okay, let's see. I just want to show you these big pictures. [pause] See, this is—. When we came to this country, there were seven of us. Now, there's sixty of us. [laughs]
KM:	That's awesome.
Vaso Volioti:	I know.
KM:	Oh, there you are. I see you too.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah. See they are all there.
<b>Fairfax Area of Alexandria in the 1970s</b>	
KM:	Excellent. And, this is at your house?
Vaso Volioti:	That's at my mom's house.
KM:	Oh, your mom's house, down in in Fairfax?
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, ah, Lenclair Street.

KM:	Okay.
Vaso Volioti:	We got that house, twenty-nine thousand dollars—1971.
KM:	Wow.
Vaso Volioti:	Now, we fixed it and it's about a million dollar home. [laughs]
KM:	Yeah, yeah. You just hold onto it, who knows? [laughs]
Vaso Volioti:	You know Richmond Highway in Fairfax? It was so nice, not so many buildings, you know. I remember it was only the Giant there, and then the little airport, the Dixie Pig across the street, you know. Then, once in a while they would bring the circus, you know, it was nice.
KM:	Oh.
Vaso Volioti:	Now, it's just Giant again, nothing.
KM:	Yeah, it's just strip malls and all sorts of, yeah, businesses in there.
Vaso Volioti:	Strip malls. And, then it used to be Andrea's restaurant, ah, what other was—.
KM:	[imposes] Mike's.
Vaso Volioti:	No, Mike's Italian restaurant and 1320 club, that doesn't exist anymore. And, just very few, now. Oh, and the old McDonald's used to be there.
KM:	There was a McDonald's there?
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah. The old-fashioned McDonald's, you know? Those days, they didn't even have bathrooms so, the kids would come to use our bathroom. I'd say twenty-five cents whoever wants to use our bathroom.
KM:	[laughs] Really?
Vaso Volioti:	I didn't. But, those days they didn't have to have bathrooms at the restaurants. McDonald's didn't have one so, they used to come at Andrea's. Good old days.
<b>Talk of Ending the Interview</b>	
KM:	I think I asked all the questions; I think we talked a lot.
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, we did.
KM:	We talked a lot. Um, is there anything else you wanted to add?
Vaso Volioti:	No.
KM:	Are you good? Anyone else want to? All right. Yeah, I think we're good. All right. How was that?
Vaso Volioti:	Okay. Good. Fine.
John Voliotis:	I felt like I was cutting in a little too much on you.
Vaso Volioti:	No, that's good, got into your politics.
KM:	We'll send a transcript. I don't know when it's going to happen. We're all sort of volunteers for the city, but we'll send a transcript.
<b>Transcript Procedure and Project.</b>	
John Voliotis:	Anyway, where is this going to be? Just down at the archives for people to go on—?
KM:	Well, no. It'll be in the archives, they have an oral history series of file cabinets, but the actual transcript, once you see it and edit whatever, we have a website. Ah, you can just google



	Office of Historic Alexandria, Oral History and you can see some of the interviews that we've already done. I mean, the big problem is, and this is tied to the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities actually, they gave us money to store this and do this. They have no immigrant stories. Zero. Nada, for the city of Alexandria, and we are twenty-six percent foreign born. And, so we're trying to correct a major gap in the history of this city. Um, we are more than George Washington and Robert E. Lee, I'm sorry. [general laughter] And so, my husband is an immigrant too, he's actually Korean.
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, Korean.
KM:	Korean, yeah, he came over. He would have been born in the U.S.—.
John Voliotis:	[imposes] This country was built on immigrants and I think everybody knows that though, too.
KM:	I know.
John Voliotis:	But, it's good to give them, and I think—.
Vaso Volioti:	Especially D.C., the architect you know that designed—.
KM:	[imposes] But, we need [unintelligible.] Right?
John Voliotis:	Yeah.
KM:	And, in this city, in terms of the history of this city, we need to document it, and we need to celebrate it in a sort of more official capacity.
<b>Greek Independence Day Celebration</b>	
Vaso Volioti:	Yeah, you know what? I want to, you know what I want?
KM:	[imposes] So, that's my job. I'm at the university, but I'm helping out with this.
Vaso Volioti:	One day, before all these things will go, I'm going to have the Greek Independence Day. The Irish have it, I want to do the Greek Independence Day here.
KM:	You should talk—.
John Voliotis:	[imposes] March twenty-fifth.
KM:	I mean, they just did the Moroccan one, you know?
Vaso Volioti:	March. I know.
John Voliotis:	March twenty-fifth is the—.
KM:	[imposes] You could set that up.
Vaso Volioti:	Oh, yeah. Well, like the Cinco de Mayo [unintelligible.]
John Voliotis:	But, you're saying to get a parade going? A Greek parade for Independence Day?
Vaso Volioti:	There's dancing, and block the streets, and have dancing.
KM:	Well, hold on, did you see the Moroccan festival?
Vaso Volioti:	No.
KM:	So, they had four days. Yeah, they worked with Mayor Euille and the Department of Rec [recreation], and they took over the front of City Hall, and they had artisans and, you know, music and dancing.

Vaso Volioti:	I would love to do that.
KM:	And, they worked with the embassy. They had the embassy involved.
John Voliotis:	Oh, hey, that's something we should look into.
KM:	A lot of the communities do it, like the Laotian community's done it in the past.
John Voliotis:	Well, let me ask you, did you get everything that you think you feel out of the interview?
KM:	Yeah. Yeah, and, you know, if you want to know anything about Greeks in the city let me know. [general laughter] I've been trying, I've been actually generating a timeline because— .
Male:	That's so cool.
KM:	Greeks start in the 1890s in the city.
John Voliotis:	Yeah.
Vaso Volioti:	After Charlie, you know the, ah, Kostarini—.
KM:	Constantinople was his name.
Vaso Volioti:	What's his name, those guys? He died—.
John Voliotis:	It was Santinos.
<b>[end of interview]</b>	